

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00
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O R 171225Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7535
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM
CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER
COMSIXTHFLT
CTF SIX ZERO
CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN
DIA WASHDC
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 2157

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PINT, MILI, ASEC, LE
SUBJ: LEBANESE SITUATION, APRIL 17, 1300 HOURS LOCAL

REF: BEIRUT 2134 (DTG 141530Z APR 78)

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. THE CEASE-FIRE IN AYN AR-RUMMANEH/
SHIAH IS HOLDING. BEIRUT PRESS HAS REPORTED "AN OFFICIAL
LEBANESE SOURCE" AS CONFIRMING A SYRIAN COMMUNIQUE THAT
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THE GOL HAD ASKED THE ADF TO INTERVENE IN AYN AR-RUMMANEH.
REFLECTING INCREASING DISPLEASURE ON BOTH PART OF
CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS, CAMILLE CHAMOUN AATAKED THE
SYRIAN COMMUNIQUE AND PRIME MINISTER AL-HOSS REPORTEDLY
OFFERED HIS RESIGNATION. UN SECRETARY-GENERAL WALDHEIM
ARRIVED IN BEIRUT FOR DISCUSSIONS ON SOUTH LEBANON. END
SUMMARY.

2. MILITARY SITUATION.

A. THE CEASE-FIRE IN AYN AR-RUMMANEH/SHIAH IS HOLDING, DESPITE SOME MINOR INFRACTIONS. THE MORNING OF APRIL 17 THE OLD SIDON ROAD, THE PRINCIPAL CONFRONTATION LINE, WAS OPEN ALTHOUGH TRAFFIC WAS MUCH LIGHTER THAN NORMAL. SAUDI AND SUDANESE TROOPS WERE POSTED ALONG THE ROAD, BUT NO SYRIANS. SYRIANS WERE, HOWEVER, STILL AT TAYUNNEH CIRCLE. EMBOFFS OBSERVED BARRICADES IN CHRISTIAN AREA.

B. ACCORDING TO RIGHTIST LE REVEIL, THE CEASE-FIRE WAS BROKEN THREE TIMES ON APRIL 16: AT 0400 HOURS WHEN A BOMB EXPLODED IN THE SYRIAN QUARTER WOUNDING A WOMAN AND TWO CHILDREN, AND AT 1015 AND AT 1745 HOURS WHEN THERE WAS SNIPER FIRE, BUT NO CASUALTIES.

3. SYRIAN COMMUNIQUE.

A. ALL LOCAL PAPERS FRONT-PAGED APRIL 14 DECLARATION BY A SYRIAN GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN IN DAMASCUS THAT SYRIAN TROOPS IN LEBANON HAD RECEIVED THEIR ORDERS TO INTERVENE IN THE AYN AR-RUMMANEH/SHIAH CLASH FROM THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT.

B. ALL PAPERS ALSO QUOTED "AN OFFICIAL LEBANESE SOURCE" AS SAYING ON APRIL 14 THAT "IT WAS THE GOVERNMENT'S DUTY TO CONFIDENTIAL

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ASK THE ADF TO INTERVENE IN THE AYN AR-RUMMANEH CLASHES, WHICH WOULD HAVE SPREAD HAD THEY CONTINUED."

4. PRESSURE ON GOL.

A. BOTH CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS HAVE SHOWN INCREASING DISPLEASURE WITH THE ADMINISTRATION OF SARKIS IN RECENT DAYS (SEPTEL). CALLING THE SYRIAN COMMUNIQUE "ONLY ONE QUARTER OF THE TRUTH," NLP LEADER CAMILLE CHAMOUN DIRECTED HIS WRATH AT THE ADF, BUT FEW DOUBTED HE WAS REALLY ATTACKING THE GOL AS WELL AS SYRIANS.

B. IN MORE MODERATE TERMS, PHALANGE CHIEF PIERRE GEMAYEL, WITHOUT COMMENTING DIRECTLY ON THE COMMUNIQUE, SAID, "IT IS INDISPENSABLE THAT WE CONSOLIDATE OUR RELATIONS WITH SYRIA AND THE ARAB WORLD."

C. PRIME MINISTER SALIM AL-HOSS, ACCORDING TO PRESS AND OTHER SOURCES, OFFERED TO RESIGN ON APRIL 14, BUT AGREED TO STAY ON AT THE PRESIDENT'S REQUEST.

5. SOUTH LEBANON.

ISRAELI DEFENSE FORCES ON APRIL 14 MADE THEIR SECOND
PARTIAL WITHDRAWAL FROM SOUTH LEBANON. AT THE SAME TIME
THE FIRST NEPALESE TROOPS ASSIGNED TO UNIFIL MOVED IN TO
TAKE UP POSITIONS IN THE AREA. SECRETARY-GENERAL KURT
WALDHEIM ARRIVED IN BEIRUT APRIL 16 FOR DISCUSSIONS ON SOUTH
LEBANON. PARKER

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